

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 115821

61
ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

IO-10 /066 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/ARP:PDMOLINEAUX/INR/RNA:GBANNER

APPROVED BY NEA:SSOBER

INR:CJONES

DOD/ISA:GSICK (INFO)

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R 170136Z MAY 75
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY SANAA
INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

S E C R E T STATE 115821

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, PINS, PINT, YS

SUBJECT: US VIEW OF PDRY DEVELOPMENTS

REF: SANA 1033

1. IN DISCUSSING RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN PDRY
WITH HAMDI, YOU MAY DRAW ON FOLLOWING US VIEW:

2. THE POLITICAL SITUATION FOLLOWING THE SIXTH CONFERENCE
OF THE NATIONAL FRONT (NF) IN MARCH APPEARS STABLE. THERE
HAVE BEEN PERSISTENT RUMORS OF A LEADERSHIP STRUGGLE
BETWEEN PRESIDENT ALI AND SECRETARY GENERAL ISMA'IL, BUT
IN THE CONFERENCE THEY APPEAR TO HAVE COMPROMISED THEIR
DIFFERENCES - BECAUSE OF STRONG EXTERNAL COMMUNIST (SOVIET
AND PFLP) PRESSURE AND BECAUSE EACH HAS CONCLUDED THAT
HIS SURVIVAL DEPENDS ON THE SURVIVAL OF THE OTHER. ALI

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 115821

AND ISMA'IL HAVE BEEN SYMBIOTIC RIVALS FOR NEARLY A DECADE
AND PROBABLY WILL CONTINUE SO AS LONG AS THEY DOMINATE
THE NF.

3. THE NF STRUCTURE WAS EXPANDED BEFORE THE CONGRESS TO INCLUDE ELEMENTS OF THE BAATH AND COMMUNIST PARTIES, AND MAY HAVE STRENGTHENED ITS POSITION BY THIS MANEUVER.

4. WHILE THE PDRY GOVERNMENT IS SEEKING TO COME OUT OF ISOLATION AND IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH OTHER ARAB STATES, ITS EFFORTS TO MAKE ITS POLICIES ACCEPTABLE TO THE MODERATE ARABS HAVE SO FAR BEEN LITTLE MORE THAN COSMETIC:

(A) IT HAS AGREED TO PERMIT EGYPT TO GARRISON PERIM ISLAND IN CASE OF ANOTHER WAR WITH ISRAEL.

(B) IT IS ACTIVELY SEEKING DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH (AND ECONOMIC AID FROM) ABU DHABI.

5. MEANWHILE, IT CONTINUES TO SUPPORT THE DHOFAR INSURRECTION. IT SEEMS UNWILLING TO COMPROMISE ITS BASIC REVOLUTIONARY GOALS.

6. THE JUNE 5 OPENING OF THE SUEZ CANAL COULD EVENTUALLY ALLEVIATE PDRY'S ECONOMIC PROBLEMS BY REESTABLISHING ADEN AS AN IMPORTANT PORT OF CALL. THE RESULTANT INCREASE IN BUSINESS WITH NONCOMMUNIST COUNTRIES MIGHT FOSTER SOME MODERATION IN FOREIGN POLICY.

7. THE ANALYSIS OF MILITARY CAPABILITIES PRESENTED IN STATE 163910 OF JULY 27, 1974 REMAINS ESSENTIALLY VALID. WHILE PDRY COULD PROBABLY INITIATE A LIMITED OFFENSIVE OPERATION AGAINST THE YAR, ITS ABILITY TO SUSTAIN HOSTILITIES IS NEGLIGIBLE. LIMITING FACTORS ARE:

(A) LOGISTIC CAPABILITY TO SUPPORT OFFENSIVE ACTION OF NO LONGER THAN TWO OR THREE WEEKS;

(B) LIKELIHOOD THAT PDRY OPERATIONS ALONG THE YAR BORDER WOULD INCITE LATENT HOSTILITIES AMONG PDRY TRIBES;

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 115821

(C) LIKELIHOOD THAT MAJOR MILITARY OPERATIONS WOULD PLACE INTOLERABLE STRAINS ON THE LOYALTY OF THE ARMED FORCES;

(D) DECLINING FORTUNES OF THE PFLO INSURRECTION IN DHOFAR AND PDRY'S CONSEQUENT SENDING ITS OWN "VOLUNTEERS" INTO COMBAT IN OMAN.

(E) PDRY'S INDIGENT FINANCIAL POSITION, AND THE FACT THAT MILITARY ACTION WOULD JEOPARDIZE ATTEMPTS TO OBTAIN FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FROM ARAB OIL STATES.

8. THUS, WE WOULD EXPECT PDRY TO AVOID OVERT HOSTILITIES WITH EITHER OMAN OR THE YAR, ALTHOUGH IT WILL CONTINUE

TO SUPPORT DISSIDENT GROUPS IN BORDER STATES.

9. THE MAJOR NEW IMPOUNDERABLE IN THE PDRY EQUATION IS
THE ATTITUDE OF THE NEW SAUDI REGIME. KING FAISAL
NEVER INTERVENED TO RESOLVE THE POLICY DIFFERENCES BE-
TWEEN PRINCE SULTAN, WHO FAVORED A HARD LINE AGAINST PDRY,
AND PRINCE FAHD, WHO FAVORED A MORE CONCILIATORY
APPROACH. NOW, AS PRIME MINISTER, FAHD HAS ALREADY SAID
PUBLICLY WHAT FAISAL WOULD SAY ONLY PRIVATELY - THAT
SAUDI ARABIA WILL GIVE ECONOMIC AID TO PDRY IF PDRY WILL
ABANDON COMMUNIST POLICIES AND RETURN TO THE ARAB FAMILY.
SINCE THE PDRY REGIME SEEMS DETERMINED TO PURSUE ITS
EXTREME POLICIES, PROSPECTS OF LARGE-SCALE SAUDI
ASSISTANCE APPEAR SLIM. HOWEVER, THE EGYPTIANS AND
OTHERS, WHO ARE TRYING TO RECONCILE THE TWO COUNTRIES, MAY
AT LEAST SUCCEED IN REDUCING PDRY SPONSORSHIP OF SUB-
VERSION IN THE YAR AND SAUDI SUPPORT OF ANTI-PDRY EXILE
GROUPS. KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 26 AUG 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY PLANS, POLITICAL SITUATION, COMBAT OPERATIONS, POLITICAL LEADERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 MAY 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: buchant0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE115821
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: NEA/ARP:PDMOLINEAUX/INR/RNA:GBANNER
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: 11652 GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: D750174-1135
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t197505102/baaaajyx.tel
Line Count: 129
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN NEA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: buchant0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 18 AUG 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <18 AUG 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <03 DEC 2003 by buchant0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: n/a
TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, PINS, PINT, YS
To: SANAA INFO JIDDA
MUSCAT
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006